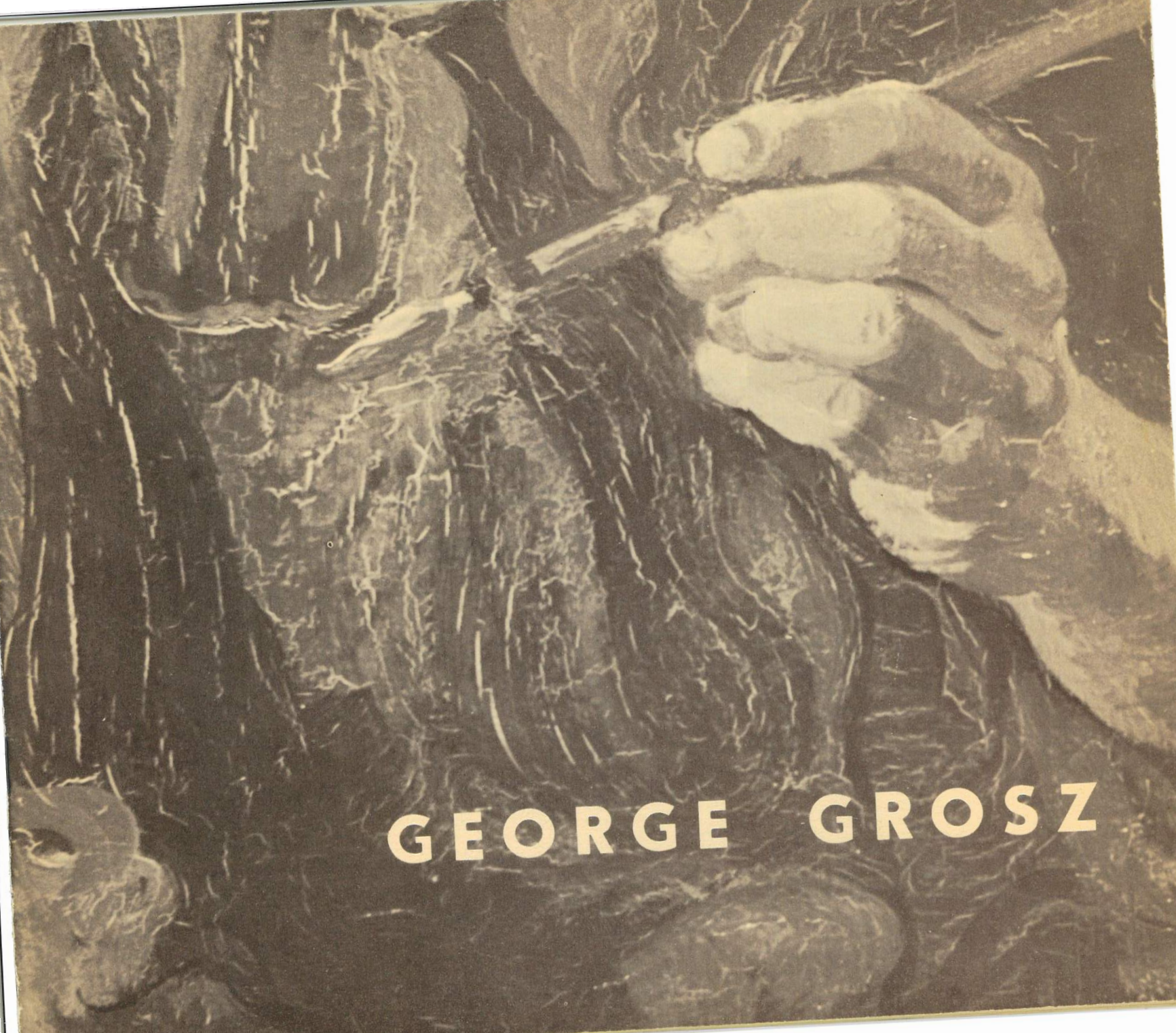


The background of the image is a dark, heavily textured surface, possibly a book cover or a piece of art. It features a hand holding a pen in the upper right quadrant, and a faint, stylized face in the bottom left corner. The overall tone is somber and artistic.

GEORGE GROSZ



The Heckscher Museum
2 Prime Avenue
Huntington, Long Island, NY 11743-7702

GROSZ COLLECTION

gift of

EVA INGERSOLL GATLING

October 1997

Cover and last page designed
from details of "Self Portrait"
(1938) in the collection of Mr.
and Mrs. John Thomas, Porters-
ville Farm, Mt. Kisco, New York.

GEORGE GROSZ

on Long Island

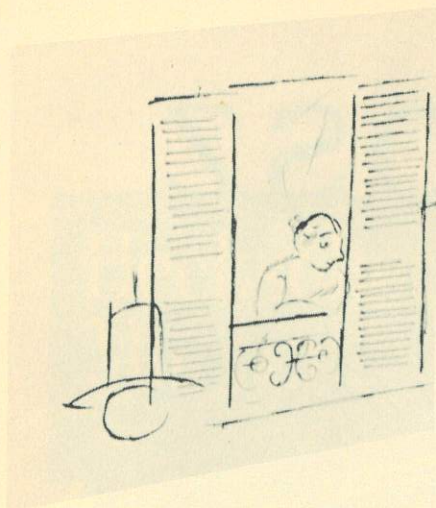
The Huntington Township Art League and the
Heckscher Museum present an exhibition of
Oils, Watercolors, Drawings and Lithographs
loaned by residents of Long Island in honor of

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Grosz". The signature is stylized with a large, looping "G" and a flourish at the end. Below the signature are several horizontal lines, some of which are crossed out with diagonal strokes.

November 7 through December 6, 1959

(1893-1959)

The Heckscher Museum, Town of Huntington, Long Island



*Ein fahrender Saenger
Von niemand gekannt;
Ein Rattenfaenger
Das ist mein Stand.*

*A wandering minstrel
Sings unrecognized
. . . A rat catcher,
That's what I am.*

“**T**his obscure German ballad was George Grosz’s favorite song. When he found himself in a circle of friends and the evening had progressed, he would round up a companion and start: “Ein fahrender Saenger . . .” His soft brown eyes would take on the look of a wounded deer. At that moment he *was* the wandering minstrel — sentimental, anxious to please yet unappreciated, in search of love but somehow lost.

In an instant his whole appearance would change. Now he was the rat catcher — ruthless, crafty; a man delighted with his own wickedness.

It is by the incident of his extraordinary talent as a draftsman that George Grosz

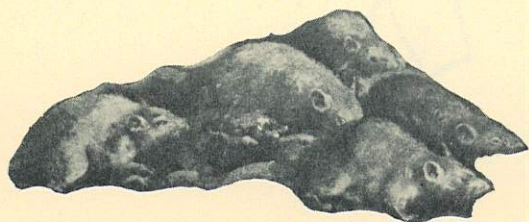
will go down in history alongside the painters. But like William Blake on another plane, he defies such classification. Grosz was essentially a dramatist. The human comedy — the human drama, was the motivating force behind his creations and whenever he tried to get away from it, his canvases became mere backdrops. To fully appreciate his genius we should approach his pictures with the same spirit we bring to a stage play. Only then will we find the excitement of a brilliant performance, life portrayed with microscopic accuracy and a terrifying insight into the all too human.

Grosz had no real interest in the abstract visual concepts and laws which govern pure painting. He lashed out at the Impressionists as having destroyed form, and the experimentations of modern art, particularly of the non-objective school, disturbed him more than he generally cared to admit.

He never was able to resolve the conflicts arising from these complexities. The “rat catcher” in him was defiant, the “minstrel” anxious to please.

George Grosz had lived among us for twenty-five years. We have arranged this exhibition to honor the man who was one of the focal points of our art life. Those who bought his pictures, his pupils, and last but not least his many loyal friends can testify to the wonderful stimulus of his knowledge and imagination. We are grateful.

Nora Mirmont Hambuechen.





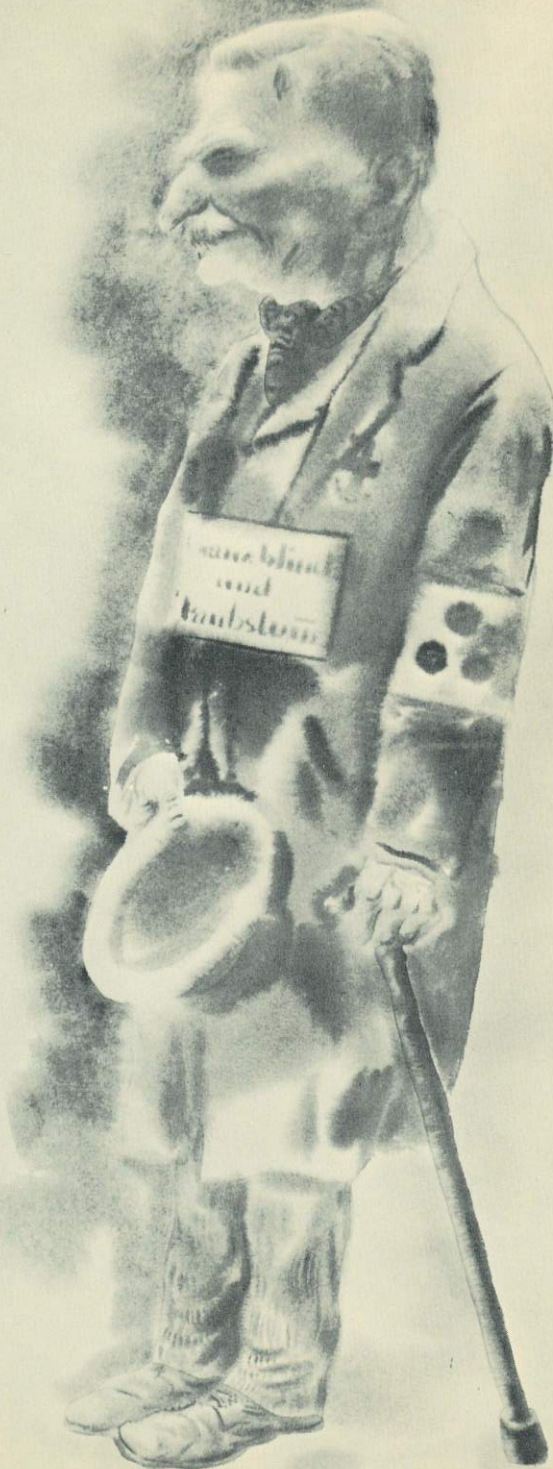
"Among the masses I found scorn, mockery, fear, oppression, falsehood, betrayal, lies and filth. Viewed at close range the masses are quite different from the glowing idealization of them . . . I have never indulged in worshipping them, even when I pretended to believe in certain political theories . . . "



22. *The Honey-mooners*

"The war clearly mirrored the play of virtue and vice . . . My art of this period was a kind of outlet for the pent-up emotions within me . . . Everything I disliked in my environment I would sketch in my notebook or on sheets of writing paper . . . I wanted to retain everything that was laughable and grotesque in my environment . . . At the time I did not plan to do anything with these drawings. They just represented the ugliness and distortions I saw all about me. I thought the war would never end, and I think it never really did end . . . Basically the people had remained the same."

44. *Blind Beggar*





9. *Rainbow Fiend*



26. *He found Something (detail)*

"Hitler served to confirm my old contempt for the masses as a herd of docile sheep directed by the will of the shepherd, with a perverted pleasure in choosing their own butcher. I did not see much good in people . . . When I was in a bad mood I despised all mankind."

"In portraying and satirising the events of the day, the comedies and tragedies of the passing scene, the artist is like a fiddler scraping on too small a violin. There is only a small place in great art for the quips and digs and *innuendo* of the satirist."

"Great cities had always fascinated me. I had felt the hidden joys and terrors and fears of urban life. I had been powerfully stirred by the great human drama which is a composite of these joys and sorrow."



12. *Golden City*





70. Reeds No. 2

"Yet Cape Cod offered me all this and more too. Here were menace and sweetness and drama — the menace of hovering storm clouds and breaking waves, the sweetness of grass and sand and trees, the drama of ants, real ants, following the threads of their destiny amid the fantastically shaped dunes and the tall grasses.

"My landscapes follow what we might call an animated realism. I go out and study closely; from the pebble; or blade of grass near me I grope my way toward the horizon, to the middleground and into the background.

"It is my belief that a painter and craftsman, even the most abstract, should always go back to Nature to refresh his creative mind and memory of form."



56. Flies, Frogs and Leaves (detail)



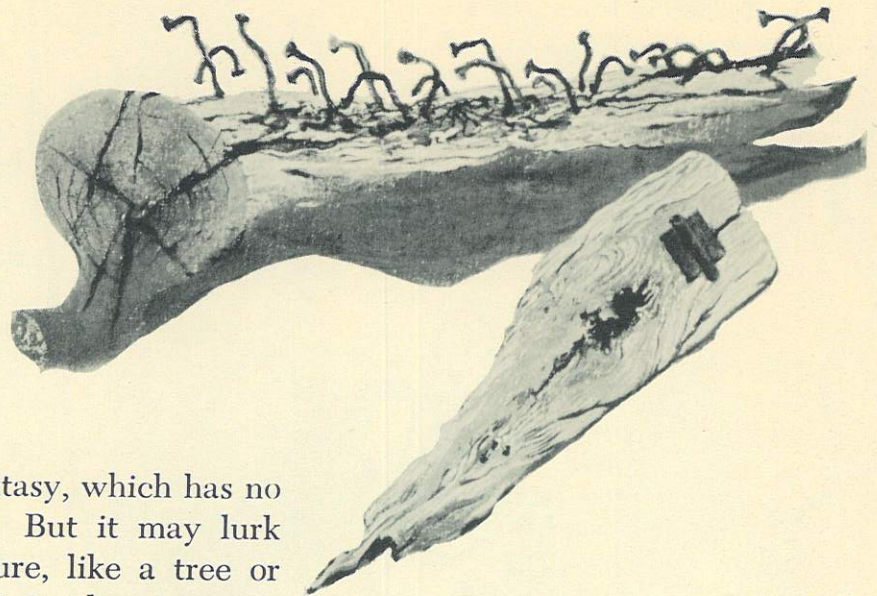
11. *Nude at the Beach*

"I do not specialize forever in horror and death . . . There are also within me regions without fear, death and war. . . . I admire many old masters and their gifts of invoking an innocent, bucolic-arcadian world.

"But in general, I am too much a product of our troubled and complex times. My world is full of shadows and less sunny. I am too much aware of the great labyrinth we live in, what we have to go through to find the way out, and that we are forever trying to escape the man-eating Minotaur."

39. *Homage A Gogol*





“Fantasy may be uninhibited fantasy, which has no contact with the world of reality. But it may lurk also beneath a solid object in nature, like a tree or a rock or a sand dune. In fact it is almost everywhere if you can penetrate deeply enough beneath the husk of things . . .

“The last century laid a great deal of emphasis on the outer world of reality but neglected the inner world. And so it is that today, when the search for inner truth again possesses the soul of man, we feel spiritually more akin to the painters of the Middle Ages than to the realistic draughtsmen who lived in the days of our grandfathers . . .

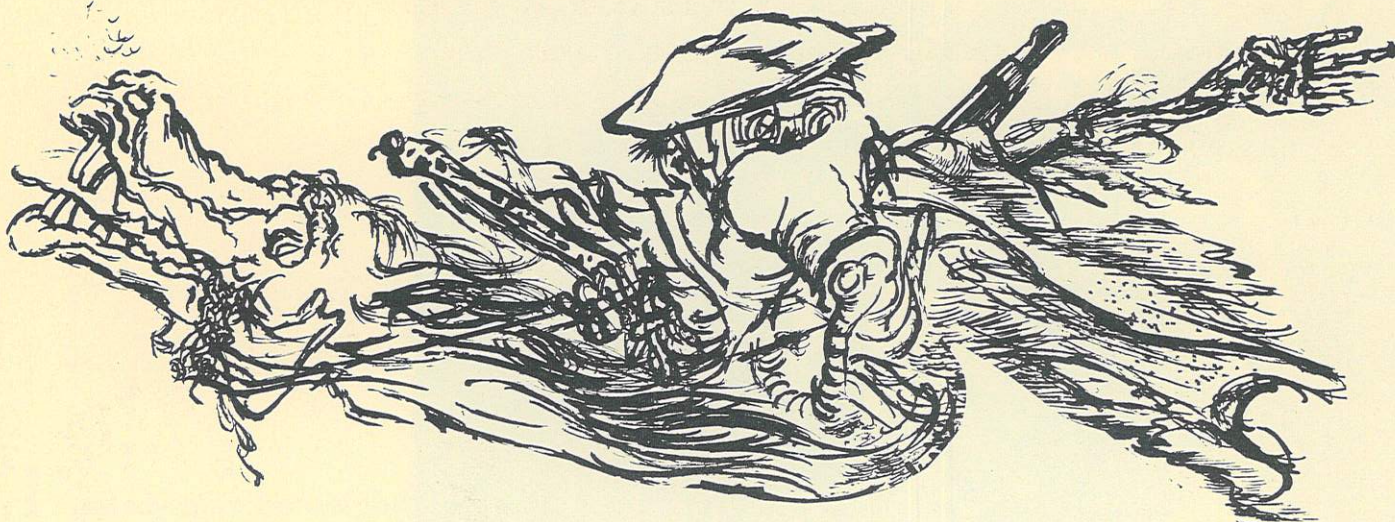
“It is perfectly logical and natural . . . that to the lines that we find in nature we should add other lines that are the product of our inner vision.

“The utter rejection of reality is a perilous matter. Totally abstract fancy has a tendency to become stylized and conventional.

“. . . he (the artist) should know how to present the appearance of things together with the inner content.”



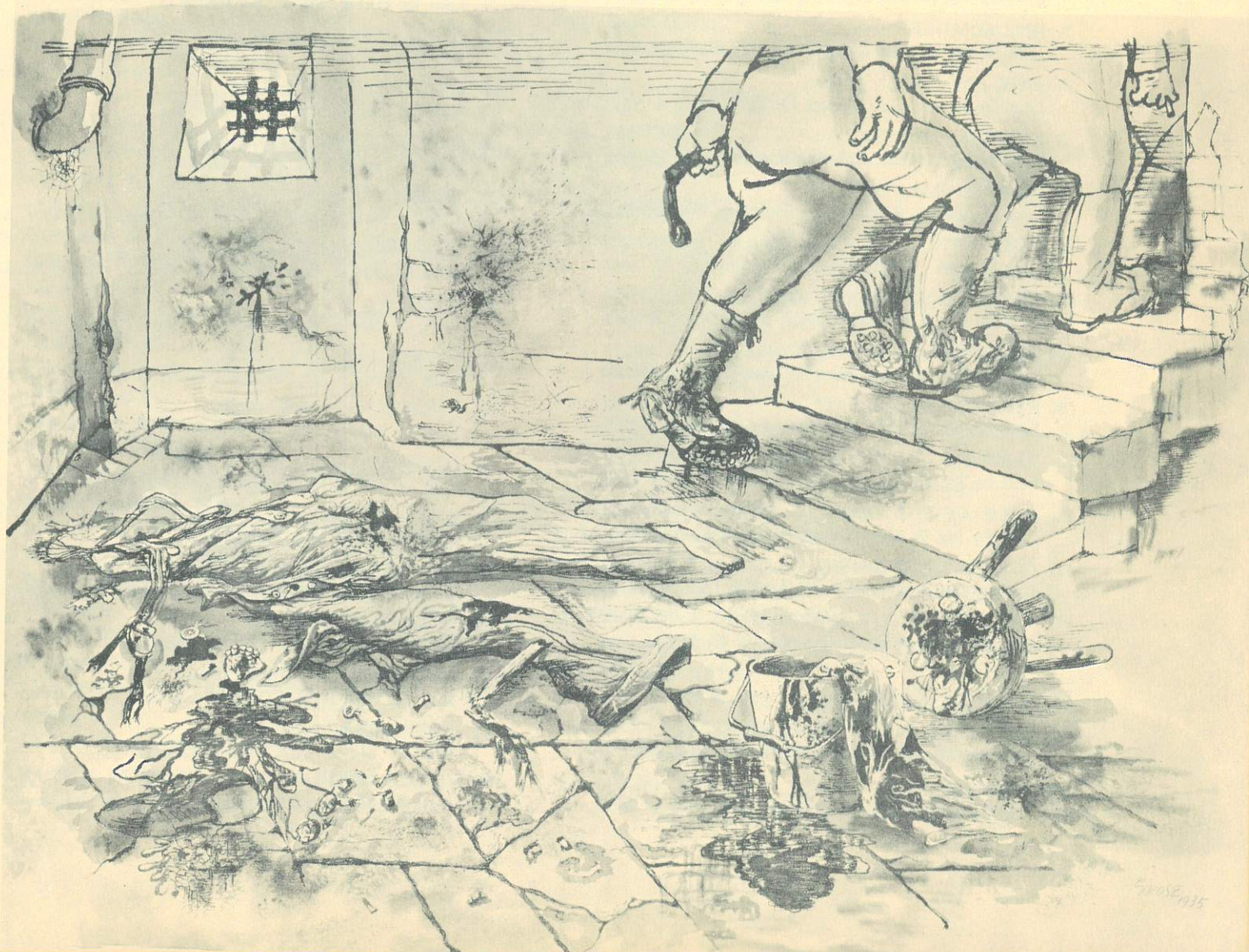
13. *The Mighty One*
Surprised by Two Poets



“ . . . After I had returned to the states my paintings became prophetic. I was compelled by an inner warning to paint destruction and ruins; some of my paintings I called “Apocalyptic Landscapes” though that was quite some time before the actual thing took place. Walking by the sound near Douglaston, Long Island, where I lived, it often seemed to me that I saw a faraway shine of ghastly fires and a feeling of utter horror crept up in me. The great Swedenborg who thought and believed that Hell was right here in our midst came to my mind. My pictures . . . became dark with illuminated ruins and lighted pyres of bloody rubble and crawling rats. One day . . . it must have been in a dream . . . I saw a tremendous crater, I heard my name, before me everything went up in a pile of smoke and debris. Later, much later, I was informed that the house where my mother had lived in Berlin had been completely bombed out. My mother had disappeared with her sister and other inhabitants. Only a big hole and the rats were left.”

“ . . . I try to recreate my world as realistically as possible. Over and over I say to myself: “Be more exact — more exact — because the more of a nightmare it is, the more I must recreate it in an understanding way.”

50. After the Questioning



CATALOGUE

OILS

1. THE CIRCUS RIDER, 1928.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Wolfram Ertinger, N. Y. C.
2. ONE SUMMER. 1948.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. George Gross, Sands Point, L.I.
3. PINK AND GRAY. 1940.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. George Gross.
4. ARTIST'S PALETTE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hanville, C. S. Harbor, L. I.
5. SUMMER DAY, 1942.
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. Ernest Hofman, Huntington, L. I.
6. STILL LIFE.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph Jarka, Centerport, L. I.
7. WOMAN UNDESSING, 1941.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Wilbert J. Levy, East Norwich, L. I.
8. NEW YORK SCENE, 1953.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. John J. Lincoln, Lloyd Neck, L. I.
9. RAINBOW FIEND, 1948.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Matthew McCabe, Huntington, L. I.
10. RAINBOW COLORS, c. 1948.
Lent by Dr. George E. Paley, Roslyn Heights, L. I.
11. NUDE AT THE BEACH, c. 1948.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Rosenberg, Westbury, L. I.
12. GOLDEN CITY, 1946.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. W.A.W. Stewart, Jr., C.S. Harbor, L.I.
13. THE MIGHTY ONE SURPRISED BY TWO POETS.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Arnott White, N. Y. C.
16. SHACK IN A STORM, 1940.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
17. AFTER THE STORM, 1940.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
18. NUDE, 1939. Page from a sketch book.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
19. CHRISTMAS CARD, 1953.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
20. BERLIN SCENE, 1930. Gouache.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
21. YELLOW DUNES.
Lent by Mrs. F. Roberts Blair, Cold Spring Harbor, L. I.
22. THE HONEY-MOONERS, 1928.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Brener, Northport, L. I.
23. NUDE No. 3.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Alistair Cooke, Peconic Bay, L. I.
24. BALTIC HOLIDAY, 1911.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Sabino Dewey, Huntington, L. I.
25. UNITED NATIONS, 1945.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Wolfram Ertinger, N. Y. C.
26. HE FOUND SOMETHING, 1948.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Carl Frucht, Huntington, L. I.
27. CITY SKYLINE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Carl Frucht.
28. LANDSCAPE WITH NAILED LOG, 1938.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin H. Golbert, Lake Success, L.I.
29. SUBWAY SCENE, 1934.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.
30. NEWSPAPER READER, 1936.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.
31. THE BAKER, 1929.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.
32. DUNES WITH GRASSES, c. 1939.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.

WATERCOLORS

14. NEW YORK SCENE, 1933-34.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton, Huntington, L. I.
15. CENTRAL PARK, 1934-35.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.

CATALOGUE CONT.

33. CAPE COD, 1939.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.
34. BAVARIAN FOREST.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph W. Hambuechen, Lloyd Neck, L. I.
35. TREE, 1953-54.
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. Ernest Hofman, Huntington, L. I.
36. THE DUNES.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph Jarka, Centerport, L. I.
37. NIGHTCLUB, 1928.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Frank Kleinholtz, Port Washington, L.I.
38. THE ART DEALER.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Lazuk, C. S. Harbor, L. I.
39. HOMAGE A GOGOL, 1955.
Lent by Miss Maria Lazuk, Cold Spring Harbor, L. I.
40. ARGUMENT.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Meyer Leshner, Great Neck, L. I.
41. GARNET LAKE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Philip N. Lehr, Huntington Sta., L.I.
42. LITTLE LAKE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Philip Lehr.
43. BEASTS OF BURDEN.
Lent by Mrs. Margaret McCabe, Cold Spring Harbor, L.I.
44. BLIND BEGGAR, 1930.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Richard M. Powers, C.S. Harbor, L.I.
45. FORESTERS, c. 1955.
Lent by Mrs. J. D. Roberts, Roslyn Heights, L. I.
46. TOWERS.
Lent by Mrs. J. D. Roberts.
47. NOON.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Karl Stauffer, Huntington, L. I.
48. OMEN.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Karl Stauffer.
49. BATTLE BETWEEN THE PALETTES & BRUSHES.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Arnott White, N. Y. C.

50. AFTER THE QUESTIONING, 1935.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Arnott White.
51. OLD MAN WATERING FLOWERS, 1954.
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. William Young, Halesite, L. I.
52. BARRACKS.
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. William Young.

EGG TEMPERA

53. SISTERS.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Hamilton J. Coulter, Lloyd Neck, L.I.

DRAWINGS

54. DUNES AT TRURO, 1939.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton, Huntington, L. I.
55. FLOWERS, BRANCHES & ROCKS. Sketchbook page.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
56. FLIES, FROGS AND LEAVES, 1943. Sketchbook page.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Ashton.
57. STUDY.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Alistair Cooke, Peconic Bay, L.I.
58. WOMAN READING.
Lent by Mrs. Blanche Davis, Lawrence, L.I.
59. WOMAN IN CAFE.
Lent by Mrs. Blanche Davis.
60. SKETCH FOR STILL LIFE, 1955.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. David Dodge, Huntington, L. I.
61. EVELYN, c. 1935.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert, Lake Success, L. I.
62. YELLOW TREE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Golbert.
63. THE CHAUFFEUR, 1929.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Shim Grudin, Huntington, L. I.
64. NUDE, 1915.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph Jarka, Centerport, L. I.

CATALOGUE CONT.

65. LEAVES, 1935.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph Jarka.
66. TREE, c. 1932.
Lent by Mrs. Joseph Jarka.
67. TO WORK.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Lazuk, C. S. Harbor, L. I.
68. AFRICAN HEADS, 1914.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Philip N. Lehr, Huntington Sta., L.I.
69. YELLOW TREE.
Lent by Mrs. Margaret McCabe, Cold Spring Harbor, L.I.
70. REEDS No. 2.
Lent by Mrs. Margaret McCabe.
71. BICYCLE CLOWN.
Lent by Mrs. Margaret McCabe.
72. DRAPED FIGURE.
Lent by Dr. George E. Paley, Roslyn Heights, L. I.
73. HOUSE IN DUNES.
Lent by Miss Bettina Peterson, Northport, L. I.
74. STUDY IN TEXTURE.
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. John J. Ricci, Huntington Sta., L.I.
75. MODEL RESTING, 1944.
Lent by Mrs. J. D. Roberts, Roslyn Heights, L. I.
76. MODEL STANDING, 1943.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Maxwell B. Roberts, Woodmere, L.I.
77. DESERTED HOUSE, 1940.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Bruno Skoggard, C. S. Harbor, L. I.
78. WOMAN MODEL.
Lent by Mrs. Ernest Whitney, Greenwich, Conn.

LITHOGRAPHS

79. CANAL, No. 2.
Lent by Mrs. Robert W. Ayer, Cold Spring Harbor, L. I.
80. ME AND I.
Lent by Mrs. Geraldine Conant, Cold Spring Harbor, L.I.

81. CANAL.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Sabino L. Dewey, Huntington, L. I.
82. OUR WORLD.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Martin Fleishner, Huntington, L. I.
83. EVE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Frank Kleinholz, PortWashington, L.I.
84. SELF PORTRAIT.
Lent by Mrs. Allen Klots, Cold Spring Harbor, L. I.
85. HOUSE ON THE DUNES.
Lent by Miss Maria Lazuk, Cold Spring Harbor, L. I.
86. WORKERS, 1912.
Lent by Mrs. Philip Lustig, Brookville, L. I.
87. WILD WEST.
Lent by Mrs. Margaret McCabe, Cold Spring Harbor, L.I.
88. COUPLE.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Simon Nuchtern, Roslyn Heights, L.I.
89. URBAN.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Simon Nuchtern.
90. DR. SCHULTZ.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Potter, C. S. Harbor, L. I.
91. LAID OFF.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Richard M. Powers, C.S. Harbor, L.I.
92. ATTENTION, DON'T TRIP.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Karl Stauffer, Huntington Sta., L. I.
93. CHRISTMAS PARTY.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Karl Stauffer.
94. CHRISTMAS.
Lent by Mr. & Mrs. Hayes McClellan Walker, Hunt., L.I.
95. CRIMINAL.
Lent by Mr. Martin Weise, Ronkonkoma, L. I.
96. WOMAN MODEL.
Lent by Mrs. Ernest Whitney, Greenwich, Conn.

A PROFILE of the ARTIST

By M. S. McCabe

George Grosz, who said that when he was in a bad mood he “despised all mankind,” was a humanist of many moods. This exhibition includes, for instance, the drawing and painting reproduced on page six, in which his moods are mocking and contemptuous; a watercolor, “He Found Something,” where the mood is rage, and another, “Blind Beggar,” filled with gentleness.



Grosz said cynically of himself, “I never loved anybody. I only wanted to make people love me.” He reflected this mood during his early years in America, aiming at fame and success in the “giant bazaar” his adopted country appeared to be. “. . . I tried to underestimate my art, to mold it into a kind of wishing rod that would turn my paintings into gold.” Wistfully, he admitted his failure: “I was not able to control the simple and wholesome qualities that I admired so much.”

When too discouraged, about himself or with the floundering frailty of mankind, he turned toward animal and plant forms, stones, shells, sand dunes and so forth. He painted nudes, with their faces most often turned away from the viewer, perhaps lest they betray too much of human personality. (Some of his models were inanimate dummies draped beautifully in folds of inanimate cloth, which seem paradoxically animate.)

Continued on next page

continued from previous page

He turned too toward a soothing preoccupation with craftsmanship, making his own brushes, mixing sand and beeswax with his pigments, and indulging joyfully in the putting together of studied details, glazes and brushstrokes.

Though the moralist in George Grosz often led him to feel disgust with mankind in general, he liked having people around him. He used language, written and spoken, with an inventive, tongue-in-the-cheek mixture of gaiety and bravado, humor and bitterness. He seemed apologetic, at times, for being an artist, dressing with studied casualness, in a sort of "Esquire" version of a substantial businessman. He once proposed, with seeming innocence, to a startled patron of the arts that they invest in an inn together. "My father was an innkeeper and I've always wanted to run an inn," he said.

A new acquaintance, bewildered over George's gentle jabs, implored elucidation. "I just talk like Paul Klee paints," Grosz explained.

Whatever George Grosz did, a river seemed to run underground in his nature, a current which could rumble its way to the surface when human events evoked it. "A certain horror which could not be banished" haunted him, among his friends and among the sand dunes on Cape Cod.

The same humanist who had shown the world the visceral anatomy of moral decay earlier, in Germany, not so long ago here on Long Island turned his inner eye toward the World War II sequel, this time depicting in furious symbolism a slothful and piteous surrender of human dignity and individuality. This was a many sided humanist, a "despiser of mankind" who cared enough about humanity to scream a warning protest against its selfdestructive side.

Recently he turned back at a doorway in Berlin and spoke, in reluctant leavetaking, to the people who had accompanied him home from a party:

"Ladies and Gentlemen . . . "

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- July 26, 1893: George Grosz was born in Berlin.
- 1898: He moved with his parents to Stolp, Pomerania, where he attended military school, and was expelled for rebelling against rigid discipline.
- 1909: Enrolled in the Royal Saxon Academy of the Fine Arts in Dresden.
- 1911: Entered Royal Arts and Crafts School in Berlin and studied under Emil Orlik.
- 1914: Served in German army as infantryman, discharged 1916 after illness and served again briefly 1917 and 1918.
- 1917: Rose to fame in Berlin.
- 1918-20: Joined the Dada movement, made political speeches and held his first one-man exhibition, collaborated in publication of magazines, appeared in Dada theatrical performances. Married Eva Louise Peter. Their sons, Peter and Martin, were born in 1926 and 1930.
- 1920: Tried and fined for anti-militaristic drawings in *Gott Mit Uns*.
- 1923: Tried and fined for defaming public morals in portfolio, *Ecce Homo*.
- 1928: Tried for blasphemy in drawings for *The Good Soldier Schwejk*. (Decision reversed later by supreme court.)
- 1932: Invited to teach at the Art Students League in New York.
- 1933: Moved to Bayside, L. I. Opened Art School at 40 E. 49th street, New York.
- 1936: Moved to Douglaston, L. I., spent first of a series of summers at Cape Cod.
- 1937: Awarded the first of two Guggenheim fellowships. Named "Cultural Bolshevik No. 1" by Hitler regime and included in Munich "Degenerate Art" Exhibition.
- 1938: Deprived of German citizenship. Received American citizenship.
- 1946: Moved to The Cottage, Hilaire Farm, Huntington, L. I., where he taught informal groups, and continued teaching at Art Students League.
- 1952: Trip to Dallas for series commissioned by A. Harris & Co.
- 1959: May 20, received Gold Medal for Graphic Art from National Institute of Arts and Letters. May 27, returned to live in Germany, July 7, died in Berlin.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Quotations on pages four through thirteen are drawn from "A Little Yes and a Big No," the Autobiography of George Grosz, the Dial Press, New York, 1946; the preface, by George Grosz, to "Drawings," H. Bitter and Company, New York 1944; "I Teach Fundamentals," a letter to students of the Cleveland Institute of Art, 1950, and "A piece of My World in a World Without Peace," Associated American Artists Gallery, 1946.

Details on pages two, six, seven and ten are used through courtesy of Vera Lazuk Gallery.

Detail on page three, through courtesy of the Associated American Artists Gallery.

Detail on page twelve from "I Was Always Present," collection of Erich Cohn.



